

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /055 W

----- 117839

R 101017Z MAR 75

FM AMCONSUL NAHA

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1630

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA

USAGO FORT BUCKNER

313TH AD KADENA

MARCORB CAMPT BULTER

COMFLEACTS OKINAWA

3RD MAR DIV CAMP COURNEY

CINCPAC HAW

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: MARR, PINS, JA

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION GEARING UP FOR MARINE

ARTILLERY EXERCISE

REF: NAHA 445 OF 10/17, NAHA 57 AND 79 (NOTAL)

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SUMMARY: SPOTLIGHTED BY INTENSE LOCAL NEWSPAPER COVERAGE, LEFT-WING DEMONSTRATORS WILL ATTEMPT TO BLOCK A MARINE ARTILLERY EXERCISE SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 11 ON THE RANGE STRADDLING PREFECTURAL HIGHWAY 104. THEY INTERRUPTED A SIMILAR EXERCISE AT MID-POINT LAST FALL AND COMPLETELY BLOCKED ANOTHER IN FEB. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE POTENTIAL FOR A VIOLENT CONFRONTATION, AT LEAST BETWEEN THE DEMONSTRATORS AND THE POLICE. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS, BOTH LEFT WING OKINAWAN NEWSPAPERS HAVE GIVEN MORE INTENSIVE COVERAGE TO THE USMC ARTILLERY EXERCISE SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 11, AND THE PROTESTS

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AGAINST IT, THAN TO ANY OTHER ANTI-U.S. ISSUE SINCE THE IE SHIMA

INCIDENT LAST JULY. THE PRESS HAS REPORTED:

A. MARINE, DFAB AND POLICE EFFORTS TO SEAL OFF THE HIGHWAY 104 FIRING AREA WITH FENCING AND BARBED WIRE;
B. PLANS BY BOTH THE JSP AND JCP ANTI-H BOMB ASSOCIATIONS AND BOTH LOCAL AND MAINLAND LABOR UNITS TO SEND DEMONSTRATORS TO THE AREA AND TO DFAB HEADQUARTERS IN NAHA;
C. PROTESTS BY LOCAL OFFICIALS FROM GOVERNOR YARA ON DOWN; AS WELL AS

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D. CRITICISM OF THE PREFECTURAL GOVT FOR NOT TAKING EFFECTIVE ACTION IN SUPPORT OF THE PROTESTERS.
2. AN INDICATION THAT THE MARINES WON SOME SUPPORT FROM LOCAL VILLAGERS IN THEIR EFFORT TO KEEP THE ROAD OPEN DURING THE PREVIOUS ABORTIVE EXERCISE WAS THE REFUSAL BY KISENBARU VILLAGE TO LET THE DEMONSTRATORS USE THE VILLAGE HALL AS A HEADQUARTERS. THE DEMONSTRATORS HAVE BEEN DISTURBING THE SLEEP OF LOCAL VILLAGERS AND BLOCKING ROADS AND STORES WITH THEIR CARS. BESIDES, THE VILLAGE HALL IS USED AS A KINDERGARTEN. THE VILLAGERS ALSO AGREED AT A MEETING NOT TO JOIN IN PROTESTS AGAINST THE FIRING "BECAUSE THEY WERE VERY BUSY HARVESTING SUGAR CANE."
3. USMC SOURCES REPORT THEY HAVE ERECTED FENCES AND ROAD BLOCKS ALONG THE HIGHWAY, AROUND THE GUN POSITIONS, AND AT ALL BUT THE LEAST ACCESSIBLE ROUTES INTO THE EXERCISE AREA. ONE HUNDRED POLICE ARE ALREADY DEPLOYED, WITH A TOTAL OF 600 EXPECTED BY TOMORROW. PREFECTURAL GOVT LIAISON CHIEF OSHIMA DELIVERED A DEMAND THAT THE EXERCISE BE POSTPONED UNTIL AFTER THE END OF THE ASSEMBLY SESSION (IN APRIL), WHICH WAS REJECTED.

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4. COMMENT: USMC SOURCES FEEL THAT THIS TIME THEY HAVE THE BEST CHANCE TO CARRY OUT THE FIRING THAT THEY HAVE HAD SINCE THE EXERCISES WERE BLOCKED AT MID-POINT LAST OCT. AT THE SAME TIME, THE OPPOSITION TO THE EXERCISE

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SEEMS MORE DETERMINED THAN EVER TO BLOCK IT. THE ODDS FAIRLY GOOD THAT THERE WILL BE TROUBLE TOMORROW AT LEAST BETWEEN THE DEMONSTRATORS AND THE POLICE.
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